

Appendix E

Public Review Comments and Responses

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The October 2009 Draft EA for the Blackwood Creek Restoration Project, and its appendixes, prepared by the Corps, were distributed to the public on October 9, 2009. The public comment period closed on November 9, 2009. The submitted comments are included in this Appendix for the EA. Comments were received from:

- ED HAAG, TAHOE PINES, CALIFORNIA
- JULIE TOMLIN, TAHOE PINES, CALIFORNIA

The Corps received two public comments on the Draft EA. This document presents all comments submitted by Federal agencies and local interests regarding the Draft EA for the proposed Blackwood Creek Restoration Project, and also presents responses to those comments. The National Environmental Policy Act requires the Federal lead agency to respond to public comments received during the public review period. This document has been prepared in accordance with these requirements.

The responses below clarify information in the Draft EA as indicated in the responses to the comments.

ED HAAG, RESIDENT, TAHOE PINES, CALIFORNIA

1) COMMENT: *Historically, the bridge at the Highway 89 (culvert) collects debris - logs stumps etc. during quick intense spring storms - rain and sleet plus snowmelt that dams and diverts runoff over the existing bank , principally at above and below Walnut Ave. with runoff then scouring existing surface soils on their way down thru existing homes and into Tahoe - some homes get flooded.*

Question - will the project in some way prevent this process and can the existing culvert at the highway be protected from future damming by screening debris above the bridge - ie: log or rock catchments similar to whats already being proposed ?

1) RESPONSE: The backwater effect that is caused by the current culvert at Highway 89 would remain largely unchanged by the proposed Project since this Project does not propose to replace the bridge at Highway 89. A specific goal of this Project is to not increase the potential for flooding upstream or downstream of Highway 89 beyond existing conditions. In addition, the restoration measures proposed include the use of log and rock jams and revetments in Blackwood Creek. These structures could help to trap some debris, reducing the amount reaching the culvert at Highway 89. Further, the California Tahoe Conservancy (CTC) would routinely check the project area for debris and remove debris from the log and rock jams and revetments as needed after Project implementation.

2) COMMENT: *Can there be a majority of Aspen, Alder and Willow used with minimal use of the black cottonwood ?*

2) RESPONSE: The current vegetation plan includes the use of aspen, alder, willow, dogwood, and black cottonwood. Removal of conifers would be conducted to encourage aspens and black cottonwood within the area. In addition, alder, willow, and dogwood trees are included in the Project vegetation plans. Black cottonwood is currently present within the project area and is included in the vegetation plan because it has ecological benefits to the Lake Tahoe Basin. If you have specific concerns about the use of black cottonwood on this project, please contact Adam Lewandowski at the California Tahoe Conservancy, (530) 543-6054 to discuss those concerns further.

3) COMMENT: *Despite all the BMP requirements of development within the Tahoe basin by TRPA, the majority of silt deposition / Lake Tahoe water clarity issues are generated by streams, namely Blackwood Creek. Until the erosive problems there are corrected as highlighted in the photos taken by this study (brown-silt laden) runoff, Lake Tahoe is in peril. I look forward to the projects completion*

3) RESPONSE: An objective identified for the Blackwood Creek Restoration Project is to improve water quality through streambank stabilization measures and sediment source control (see page 2 of the Final EA). Through the streambank stabilization measures and new channel construction proposed by the project, it is expected that sediment erosion and sediment discharge to Lake Tahoe would decrease within the project area. However, this project is located within the lower portion of a larger watershed. Additional streambank stabilization and restoration projects have been implemented and future projects are proposed upstream of the project area. Cumulatively, these restoration projects would decrease erosion and sediment discharge to Blackwood Creek and Lake Tahoe.

JULIE TOMLIN, PROPERTY OWNER, TAHOE PINES, CALIFORNIA

COMMENT: *We own property in the neighborhood just next to the mouth of Blackwood Creek into Lake Tahoe. Over the years we have seen a tremendous amount of silt, rock and debris flowing into the Lake and completely changing the flow of water into the Lake. So much so that the creek bank and bed has risen very high and the flow is very shallow as a result. The area that most effects us is this part of the creek below the Blackwood Creek Bridge on Hwy. 89 and into Lake Tahoe. In some past flood years the creek stopped up so badly that it overflowed it banks and flooded our neighborhood homes, thank goodness not our property, but our neighbors.*

1) COMMENT: *When does this project begin?*

1) RESPONSE: The Blackwood Creek Restoration Project is scheduled to begin in late summer of 2010. In 2010 the only work that would be conducted would be staging for construction and treatments for the aspen areas. It is proposed that all channel construction and streambank stabilization work would be conducted in the summer of 2011. This work would be finished in one construction season and completed by fall 2011. The Construction schedule is identified in Section 2.4.4 of the Final EA.

2) COMMENT: *How long will it take to mitigate these flow issues?*

2) RESPONSE: The Project is sponsored by the California Tahoe Conservancy (CTC). Property under ownership of the CTC is located west of Highway 89. Work proposed under this restoration project is confined to property within CTC ownership and a small area downstream and adjacent to Highway 89, refer to Plate 4. Due to right-of-entry issues and project funding by the federal government, no work would be conducted within private property. Because property between Highway 89 and Lake Tahoe is privately held, this Project is not proposing to conduct restoration within this reach including the areas that you have discussed. It is not expected that this project would mitigate flows within this portion of the Creek, however the project has been designed to not increase flooding within this area beyond the existing condition. Further, a goal of the channel stabilization elements proposed with this restoration is to decrease sediment erosion. In the future this project would decrease sediment discharge from within the project area to downstream areas including the area where your property is located.

3) COMMENT: *Will there be any help with the area I addressed below the Bridge to the mouth of this creek? We know that the adjacent neighbors to the creek cannot dredge and one of their piers is now totally out of water, not just due to the drop in lake level but due to the silt, debris runoff.*

3) RESPONSE: See response to Comment 2 above.

-----Original Message-----

From: Edgar Haag DBA [mailto:haagsite@sbcglobal.net]

Sent: Wednesday, October 07, 2009 4:15 PM

To: Parker, Mario G SPK

Subject: blackwood creek

Mario,

Plans look good - proof is in the installation and effectiveness of the design - comments:

1. Historically, the bridge at the Highway 89 (culvert) collects debris - logs stumps etc. during quick intense spring storms - rain and sleet plus snowmelt that dams and diverts runoff over the existing banks, principally at above and below Walnut Ave. with runoff then scouring existing surface soils on their way down thru existing homes and into Tahoe - some homes get flooded.

Question - will the project in some way prevent this process and can the existing culvert at the highway be protected from future damming by screening

debris above the bridge - ie: log or rock catchments similar to whats already

being proposed ?

2. Can there be a majority of Aspen, Alder and Willow used with minimal use of the black cottonwood ?

3. Despite all the BMP requirements of development within the Tahoe basin by

TRPA, the majority of silt deposition / Lake Tahoe water clarity issues are generated by streams, namely Blackwood Creek.

Until the erosive problems there are corrected as highlighted in the photos taken by this study (brown-silt laden) runoff), Lake Tahoe is in peril.

I look forward to the projects completion Ed Haag

3965 Walnut Ave.

Tahoe Pines

-----Original Message-----

From: gldnbrjt@aol.com [mailto:gldnbrjt@aol.com]
Sent: Tuesday, November 10, 2009 6:17 PM
To: Parker, Mario G SPK
Subject: EA :Section 108 Blackwood Creek Prj. Tahoe

Mario,

I realize that this is beyond the response time for this draft, I read it over and simply have a few questions.

We own property in the neighborhood just next to the mouth of Blackwood Creek

into Lake Tahoe. Over the years we have seen a tremendous amount of silt, rock and debris flowing into the Lake and completely changing the flow of water into the Lake. So much so that the creek bank and bed has risen very high and the flow is very shallow as a result. The area that most effects us

is this part of the creek below the Blackwood Creek Bridge on Hwy. 89 and into Lake Tahoe.

In some past flood years the creek stopped up so badly that it overflowed it banks and flooded our neighborhood homes, thank goodness not our property, but our neighbors.

Questions:

When does this project begin?

How long will it take to mitigate these flow issues?

Will there be any help with the area I addressed below the Bridge to the mouth of this creek? We know that the adjacent neighbors to the creek cannot

dredge and one of their piers is now totally out of water, not just due to the drop in lake level but due to the silt, debris runoff.

I would appreciate a response.

Thank your very much.

Julie Tomlin
co property owner of:
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Tahoe Pines

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